

## Unit Ten: Peculiarities of Buddhist Schools

### Theravāda

It is commonly accepted (among Theravada Countries) that the most authentic teachings of the Buddha were preserved in the Theravāda Buddhist School as it descends from the immediate disciples of the Buddha. Though some adherents of the tradition from time to time deviated from it for some reasons or others it managed to remain in India, securing its identity up to the time of third Buddhist Council and then, as the result of Emperor Asoka's Buddhist missionary work it was thoroughly rooted in Sri Lanka. Presently, it prevails mainly in the countries like Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia and Laos and attains popularity in Singapore, Malaysia, and some Western countries in Australia and USA.

According to this tradition, the Buddha preached his teaching to the people in India through the media of "*Māgadhaika vohāra*" (language of Magadha) which was later popularly known as Pāli<sup>2</sup>. Teachings, as Theravādins believe, which were presented by the Buddha in Pāli language were contained in the Tipitaka. Classification of the teachings of the Master into 'Dharma' and 'Vinaya, and the compilation respectively into nikāyās and 'Vibhangās (Bhikkhu-vibhanaga and Bhikkhuni-vibhanga) took place at the first Buddhist Council presided over by Venerable Mahā Kassapa and attended by five hundred elders (Therās) who were the pioneers of Theravada<sup>3</sup>. However, the commentarial tradition of Theravāda believes that the compilation of the teachings of the Buddha into Tripitaka (three baskets) namely Sutta, Vinaya and Abhidhamma had taken place at the first Council itself<sup>4</sup>. According to the Canonical tradition, the second Buddhist council which was held after hundred years of passing away of the Master has endorsed what was rehearsed at the first council<sup>5</sup>. According to the available Theravāda sources, with the addition of Kathāvatthu-pakarana into Abhidhamma-pitaka, the compilation of the canon of the Theravādins into Tripitaka was finalized at the third Buddhist Council which had taken place at the time of Emperor Asoka after about three hundred years of the Buddha's Parinibbāna.

Threefold canon of the Theravadins which is known as Tipitaka consists respectively of discourses (suttās), matters relating to the discipline (Vinaya) of the monastic Orders (monks and nuns) and systematically organized doctrines which are already scattered in the Suttās (Abhidhamma). The discourses of the Buddha contained in the Sutta-pitaka are grouped under five sections (Nikāya) as follows:

Digha-nikāya (long discourses)

Majjhima-nikāya (middle length discourses)

Samyutta-nikāya, (connected discourses)

Anguttara-nikāya (gradual discourses) and

Khuddaka-nikāya Khuddaka-nikāya which is further sub-divided into fifteen books namely, 1.

Khuddaka-pāṭha, 2. Dhamma-pada, 3. Itivuttaka. 4. Udāna

5. Vimāna-vatthu, 6. Peta-vatthu, 7. Thera-gāthā, 8. Their-gāthā, 9. Jātaka, 10. Cariyā-pitaka, 11.

Apadāna, 12. Sutt-nipāta, 13. Patisambhidā-magga, 14. Cula-niddesa and 15. Mahāniddesa.

Vinaya-pitaka consisted of five books which bear the name of Pāli at the end of the special name of each book. They are as follows:

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<sup>1</sup>. *Samantapāsādikā, Culavagga* commentary.

<sup>2</sup>. The word Pāli as a name of language came to existence after the 13<sup>th</sup> century AD in Sri Lanka.

<sup>3</sup>. *Culavagga - Pancasatikkhanda*

<sup>4</sup>. *Samanta-pāsādikā, Vinayattakathā, Nidāna* (introduction)

<sup>5</sup>. *Culavagga - Sattasatikkhanda*

Pārājika-pāli  
Pācittiya-pāli  
Cūlavagga-pāli  
Mahāvagga-pāli and  
Parivāra-pāli

Abhidhamma-pitaka is comprised of seven books which add the name of Pakarana at the end of their special name. They are enumerated as:

Dhamma-sangani-pakarana  
Vibhanga-pakarana  
Dhātu-kathā-pakaran  
Puggala-pannati-pakarana  
Yamaka-pakarana and  
Patthāna-pakarana

It seems that the Theravāda enriched and secured its unique position not only from the canonical tradition but also from its exegetical tradition. It possesses post commentarial exegesis, commentaries as well as sub-commentaries. Commentaries which are amounting to 52 in number belonged to almost all the Canonical books are themselves provide a vast exegetical literature. When we examine the wide range of Theravāda Buddhist literature, we can evidently identify as Prof. Y. Karunadasa suggested in his monumental work on Theravāda Abhidhamma<sup>6</sup>, two layers of thought in respect of doctrinal aspect of Theravāda. According to Prof. Karunadasa, "one is Early Buddhism, which is presented in the Pāli Sutta Pitaka and to a lesser extent in the Vinaya pitaka. The other is the distinctly Theravāda Buddhism which makes use of both the literary sources of Early Buddhism and the texts of the Pali Abhidhamma to evolve a very comprehensive system of thought<sup>7</sup>. The religious aspect of Theravāda tradition is represented in the Pali Sutta and Vinaya Pitakas together with Pāli commentarial sources.

That the authority and authenticity of Early Buddhism which is reflected in Sutta and Vinaya pitakas of the Theravada anon is quite evident from the fact that all the early Buddhist sects commonly accepted both Suttas and vinaya. As recorded in the Kathāvatthu which is compiled during the third Buddhist Council, both Theravādins and non-Theravādins quote from the same suttas in support of their doctrinal interpretations. This means that in spite of their opinions, the entire Buddhist sect equally acknowledged the authority and authenticity of suttās. On the other hand, evidences show us that all the Buddhist schools had their code of discipline (Vinaya). It is interesting to note here that we can not find many differences between Vinaya of Theravāda and that of other Buddhist schools.

Doctrinal aspect depicted in the Suttapitaka of the Theravāda Canon is mainly centered on the nature of the beings. Different facets of the nature of being are discussed under the four Noble Truths which related to the nature of beings Dukkha, (suffering), the cause of that nature (dukkha-samudaya, emergence of suffering), cessation of that nature (dukkha-nirodha, cessation of suffering) and the path leading to the cessation of that nature (dukkha-nirodha-gāmini-patipadā, path leading to the cessation of suffering). The nature of the being that it is to say the suffering is considered to be the reality of the being. Again it is identified with the five

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<sup>6</sup> Y. Karunadasa, *The Theravā Abhidhamma, Its Inquiry into the Nature of Conditioned Reality*, Published by the Centre of Buddhist Studies, The University of Hong Kong, 2010, p.3

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

aggregates of grasping<sup>8</sup> into which the empirical personality of the being is analyzed<sup>9</sup>. The five groups of aggregate of grasping are enumerated as:

Rupa (forms), material aspect of the personality

Vedanā, feelings or affective aspect

Sannā, perceptions or recognizing aspect

Sankhāra, formations or volitional aspect

Vinnāna, consciousness or knowing aspect

The purpose of analyzing the empirical personality into five groups of aggregates is to show that there is not any permanent substantial entity which is known as soul or self within or outside these five aggregates to which the notion of person or being is super-imposed<sup>10</sup>. Further, these aggregates are shown as the factors or the constituents of personality which are the momentarily arisen depending on causes and conditions. Causally conditioned factors are said to be invariably inheriting three characteristics known as impermanence, (anicca), suffering (dukkha) and soullessness (anatta)<sup>11</sup>. The term Dukkha (suffering) is used in the Noble Truths to denote all the three characteristics mentioned above which are invariably concomitant with five aggregates.

Emergence of suffering is explained under the doctrine of Paticca-samuppāda (arising because of). For five aggregates of grasping is identified as suffering, doctrine of paticca-samuppāda explains how the five aggregates of grasping arises depending on causes and conditions and it further elaborates the way how those five aggregates of grasping continues to exist through out Samsāra until its causes and conditions are completely eradicated. Therefore, the doctrine of paticca-samuppāda in Theravāda tradition is a direct response to all the philosophical inquiries relating to the origin and existence of the being.

The truth of the Cessation of suffering points to the fact that suffering can be eradicated. It is none other than the cessation of the causes and conditions which are responsible for producing the five aggregates of grasping. Both the aspects of emergence and cessation of the five aggregates of grasping are dealt with the doctrine of paticca-samuppāda. When the affirmative aspect of the causes and conditions of origination shown in the doctrine of paticca-samuppāda ceased to exist, it is the cessation of suffering. As this state is achievable by eradication of defilements (āsavakkhaya) which is the cause of the emergence of five aggregates of grasping, it is said to be the appeasement of all the cankers (sabbasankhāra-samatha) and the giving up of all the ... (sabbupadhi-patinissagga). It is emphasized that this state of affairs is a position which is obtainable only within the life itself but not with the death of a being. Such a being who achieved the cessation of suffering within his own life time is said to be one who does not have further birth after the death of the present life.<sup>12</sup>

The religious path of the cessation of suffering is exemplified in the Noble Eightfold Path which is also known as Middle Path. It is a spiritual discipline consisted of moral conduct (sila) mental culture (samādhi) and enrichment of wisdom (paññā)<sup>13</sup> which should be practiced without resorting to both self-indulgence (kāmasukhallikānuyoga) and self-mortification (atta-kilamathānuyoga).<sup>14</sup> The path begins with the right view of the reality and its cessation. As

<sup>8</sup> . "samkhittena pancupādānakkhandhā dukkhā". *Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta* of *Samyutta-nikāya*

<sup>9</sup> . *Samyutta-nikāya, Anatta-lakkhana-sutta*

<sup>10</sup> *Anatta-lakkhana-sutta*.

<sup>11</sup> "Tīnimāni bhikkhave sankhatassa sankhata-lakkhanāni" *Anguttaranikāya, Tikanipāta*

<sup>12</sup> "āyam antimā jāti natthi idāni punabbhavo" *Digha-nikāya, sāmāññaphala-sutta*

<sup>13</sup> "Sīle patitthāya naro sapaṇno – cittam panna ca bhāvaye" *Samyutta-nikāya*

<sup>14</sup> *Samyutta-nikāya, Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta*.

reality is nothing but the conditionality which is reflected through impermanence, suffering and soullessness, the right view gradually leads one to the detachment towards phenomenal world. Constituents of the path are the gradual steps towards the wisdom which reveals the real nature of the being as it is. As soon as wisdom arises complete detachment comes to exist. It is the cessation of defilements through which the beings are bound to suffering.

Distinctly Theravāda Buddhism which is reflected through early Buddhist literary sources and text books of Abhidhamma differs from early Buddhism only in the sense that it brought out more comprehensive system of thought based on the teachings of the Buddha scattered in different discourses on the nature of conditioned reality. Basing on the different analysis of empirical personality, shown in the early Buddhist discourses Theravāda Buddhism in Abhidhamma makes explicit what the Buddha taught by his analysis that individual existence is an impersonal congeries of dependently arising psycho-physical factors, through its minutely defined analysis. Defining the task of the Abhidhamma Prof. Y. Karunadasa observes:

"It (Abhidhamma) arose from the need to make sense out of experience in meditation and was designed as a guide for meditative contemplation and insight. The Buddha had taught that to perceive the world correctly is to see, not self-entities and substances, but bare phenomena arising and perishing in accordance with their conditions. The task the Abhidhamma specialists set themselves was to specify exactly what these "bare phenomena" are and to show how they interact with other phenomena to make up our "common sense" picture of the world."<sup>15</sup>

The bare phenomena which are known as Dhammās are mainly classified into two main aspects namely conditioned realities (Sankhata-dhammā) and unconditioned reality (Asankhata-dhamma). Conditioned realities are further divided into three categories namely consciousness (citta), mental factors (cetasika) and material factors (rupa). The consciousness is enumerated as one factor explained differently according to its possible combinations with various mental factors. When it is classified in accordance to its emergence in the planes of existence, it is considered as having eighty nine varieties of consciousness coming under four classes: (i) 54 in sensuous plane (kāma-bhūmi) (ii) 15 in fine material plane (rūpa-bhūmi) 12 in immaterial plane (arūpa-bhūmi) and 8 in supra-mundane plane (lokuttara bhūmi). Abhidhammikās accept fifty-two mental factors (cetasikās) different from each other in its character and function. They are usually brought under four broad headings as follows: (i) seven universal factors (sabbacitta-sādhāraṇa) (ii) six occasional factors known as miscellaneous (pakinnaka) (iii) fourteen unwholesome factors (akusala) and (iv) twenty-five beautiful factors (sobhana)

Material Dhammās which are considered as the basic constituents into which the whole of our material existence is reduced are twenty-eight in number subsumed under two headings namely (i) four great elements of matter (mahā bhūta) and (ii) twenty-four dependent material factors (upādā-rūpa). According to Abhidhamma, the physical phenomena of our world of experience come into existence as a result of the aggregation and interaction of the material factors. As mentioned earlier, Nibbāna is considered as unconditioned reality (asankhata) which transcends the phenomenal existence.

According to the religious aspect of Theravāda Buddhism, acceptance of Buddha, dhamma and sangha (ti-ratana or ratanattaya = Three Gems) as refuge (sarana) is the primary requirement to become a Buddhist. But it should be emphasized here that the term refuge (sarana) is not used in the sense of shelter or place of safety by means of which one can achieve worldly requirements, but in the sense of that which supports for the religious achievements. It is stated that whoever goes for refuge of Buddha, dhamma and the sangha sees four Noble truths with right knowledge.<sup>16</sup> The religious aspect of Theravada Buddhism presents one and the same

<sup>15</sup> Y. Karunadasa, *The Theravada Abhidhamma*, p.15

<sup>16</sup> . "Yo ca buddham ca dhammam ca sangham ca saranam gato

course of religious action for both the members of the monastic Order and the lay society. The course of religious action is none other than the Noble Eight fold Path. For the aim of the religious actions of both the groups are one and the same, that is to say the cessation of suffering or in other words nibbāna. Though both the groups have to follow the same path, the manner of the following path slightly differs from each other group.

The members of the Orders of the monks and the nuns seek to acquire nibbāna within this very life time. Having given up the household life they enter into the Order with the firm determination to dedicate their whole life in the religious path. They consider that it is not easy to lead a religious life (brahmacariya) by being a householder.<sup>17</sup> In conformity with this purpose, members of the two Orders have to follow the path in its highest form. For an example, sexual conduct among the right action in the path is completely prohibited for the monks and the nuns whereas the lay followers have to refrain only from the sexual mis-conduct. The way of following the path by the monastic members in the strict sense is described in many discourses in the first section of Dighanikāya.

The emphasis has been drawn specially towards the first five steps of the Noble Eight fold path in the religious activities of the lay followers. The five precepts (pañca-sila) which are considered as permanent conduct of the lay followers mainly covers two steps namely, right action (sammā kammanta) and right speech (sammā vācā) of noble eight fold path. In addition, right livelihood (sammā ājiva) is also recommended for the lay people. They have to earn their livelihood by the righteous, lawful, un-harmful and praiseworthy means. Unrighteous, unlawful and forceful means like stealing and cheating are condemned in the life of lay followers. Refraining from the five kinds of wrong trade, namely selling animals for killing (*satta-vanijjā*) selling weapons (*sattha-vanijjā*), selling meat (*mansa-vanijjā*) selling drugs and intoxicants (*majja-vanijjā*) and selling poisons (*visa-vanijjā*) are considered as right livelihood of the lay people.<sup>18</sup>

For the lay followers in general do not wish to obtain nibbāna in the present life itself, Theravāda Buddhism recommends an additional cause of action to them for the well being of their lives to come. The concept of the future life is a necessary implication in Buddhism. Accumulation of merits and getting rid of demerits are said to be the cause of happier life. Therefore, there are many references in the Theravāda Buddhist literature to the recommendation of merits for the happiness in life. The Dhammapada says:

*"Idha nandati pecca nandati – kata puñño ubhayattha nandati  
Puññam me katamti nandati – bhiyyo nandati sugatim gato"*<sup>19</sup>

"Here he is happy, hereafter he is happy. In both states the well-doer is happy: "Good have I done" (thinking thus), he is happy. Furthermore, is he happy, having gone to a blissful state."

*"Puññam ce puriso kayirā – kayirā te tam punappunam  
Tam hi chandam kayirātha – sukho puññassa uccayo"*<sup>20</sup>

"Should a person perform a meritorious action, he should do it again and again; He should find pleasure therein: blissful is the accumulation of merit"

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*Cattāri ariya-saccāni sammappaññāya passati" .. Apannaka-sutta. ?*

<sup>17</sup> . "nyidam sukaram agāram ajjhāvasatā ekanta paripunnam ekanta-parisuddham sankhalikhitam brahmacariyam caritum."Dīghanikāya

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<sup>19</sup> . Dhammapada, Yamaka-vagga 18

<sup>20</sup> . Ibid, Pāpa-vagga 3

For the accumulation of merits ten types of meritorious activities known as *dasa puññakiriya-vatthu* are introduced. Those are as follows:

*Dāna* (generosity)

*Sila* (moral behavior)

*Bhāvanā* (meditation)

*Patti* (transference of merits)

*Pattānumodanā* (

*Veyyāvacca* (attendance to duties)

*Apacāyana* (respect to the elders)

*Desanā* (deliverance of Dhamma)

*Suti* (listening the Dhamma)

*Ditthiju* (holding straightforward views)

Most of them are welfare activities. Though there are no welfare organizations for Buddhists, they themselves are bound to engage in welfare activities by the name of merit without any interference of others. These meritorious activities are supposed to be conducive to achieve to good birth and a comfortable life either human world or one of the six heavens known as *cātummahārājika*, *tāvātimsa*, *santusita*, *yāma*, *nimmānarati* and *paranimmita-vasavatti*

Another important religious aspect of Theravāda tradition is that it is not particular about the method of achieving end result of the religious life, that is to say the cessation of suffering - the Nibbāna. It recognizes three means or ways (*Yāna*-vehicles) through which liberation can be achieved. They are *Sammā sambuddha-yāna*, *Paccekabuddha-yāna* and *Arahanta-yāna*. The Nibbāna achieved through either one of these ways is considered one and the same. Theravāda considers that there is not any distinction in the Nibbāna obtained in either one of the three ways. *Sammā sambuddha* is the one who is fully awoken or enlightened, one discovering the truth by one's own knowledge without the guidance of others and who revealed it to the world. One who fully realized the truth by one's own knowledge and could not reveal it to the world is considered to be the *Paccekabuddha*. The *Arahanth* realizes the truth and attains Nibbāna with the guidance of *Sammā sambuddha*. In relation to final liberation, no one of the *Yānās* considered to be higher or lower than the other. The one who achieved liberation through either of three *yānās* is said to have eradicated all the defilements without any residue and hence reaches the highest aim (*anuppatta-sadattho*) and became a 'worthy man' an arahant whose life is considered to be final in the cyclic existence without further birth (*ayamantimā jāti. Natthidāni punabbhavo*)<sup>21</sup>

The Buddha in the Theravāda is highly respected and venerated as one who discovered the truth of the world by his own effort and knowledge without any guidance or support from any being or power. The Buddha is considered as one who possesses great compassion (*mahā karunā*) and great wisdom (*mahā paññā*) being the omniscience, all-knowing one due to which he is supposed to have become incomparable to anyone in the threefold world; human, divine and Brahma world. This position of the Buddha accepted by Theravādins is said to be confirmed by the Buddha himself in one of his discourses namely, *Ariya-pariyesana sutta of Majjhima-nikāya*. It is said in that discourse that after the enlightenment he was going towards *vārānasi* from *Gayā* with the intention of preaching his first sermon. On the way he met an ascetic called *Upaka* who asked the question as to who is your teacher. Then the Buddha introducing himself said the following:

*Sabbābhibhū sabbavidūhamasmi*

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<sup>21</sup> . D. Sāmaññaphala-sutta.

*Sabbesu dhammesu anūpalitto  
Sabbanjaho tanhakkhaye vimutto  
Sayam abhiññāya kamuddiseyya*

*Name ācariyo atthi- sadiso me navijjati  
Sadevakasmin lokasmin – natthi me patipuggalo*

*Ahan hi arahā loke- ahan satthā anuttaro  
Ekomhi sammāsambuddho- sitibhūto<sup>22</sup>*

"Victorious over all, omniscient am I,  
Among all things undefiled,  
Leaving all, through death of craving freed,  
By knowing for myself, whom should I point to?  
(As my teacher).

For me there is no teacher,  
One like me does not exist,  
In the world with its *devās*  
No one equals me.

For I am perfected in the world,  
A teacher supreme am I,  
I alone am all-awakened,  
Become cool am I, *nibbāna* attained".

It is the Early Buddhism as well as Theravāda Buddhism which confirmed and established the conception of the Buddha which represents the historical humanity subjected to human nature. Though the Buddha is depicted as one who has superhuman qualities (*uttari manussa-dhamma*) mainly because of his inner virtues obtained as the result of fulfillment of perfections (*pārami*) Theravāda sources were more empathetic on the historical human nature of the Buddha. It is true that some events such as birth, enlightenment and passing away of the biography of the Buddha are described with literal embellishments and exaggeration attaching them to some miraculous happenings. But Theravāda tries to retain as far as possible the view that the Buddha was really a human being born to the human parents and acquired a position which can be attained by a human being by means of the completion of necessary requirements. The Buddha in Theravāda is not a god nor an incarnation of the god and nor a representation of the god.

## Theravāda and Vibhajjavāda

The term *Vibhajjavāda* has given rise to controversy among the Buddhist scholars over its actual connotation. Sri Lankan chronicles and Pāli commentaries refer this term without any qualified sense to the standpoint held by the Theravādins at the time of third Buddhist Council. Before the council, according to the *Vinaya* commentary of Buddhaghosa, King Asoka has taken steps to purify the Buddhist dispensation as it was considered to be corrupted by heretical views. In this regard he summoned the members of the Order and asked them a question which is, "What was the Perfectly Enlightened One as a teacher?" The monks who replied that "The perfectly Enlightened One was *Vibhajjavādi*" were accepted as true monks and others who replied in

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<sup>22</sup> Ariyapariyesana-sutta, M.1.171

contrary to this were expelled from the Order<sup>23</sup>. The term "*vibhajjavādi*" as the correct reply to the king's question, is undefined in the commentary. However, the monks who gave the correct answer were identified as Theravādins, but, in what sense Theravādins were known as *vibhajjavādins* is uncertain.

When we examine the literary sources of other Buddhist traditions, it would not be difficult for us to get some clue as to why this particular term was selected to define the true Buddhist monks. According to those literary sources not only the Theravāda but some other Buddhist sects too are identified as *Vibhajjavādins*. *Abhidharma-kosha-bhāṣya* of Vasubandhu which is a work of *Sarvāstivāns* introduces *vibhajjavādins* in the following manner:

"Those who maintain after having analyzed that some things exist, namely the present and the past karma which has not borne its fruits and that some things do not exist, namely the past (karma) which has borne its fruit and the future are called *Vibhajjavādins*."<sup>24</sup>

The name "*vibhajjavāda*" is given in this book does not refer to *Theravādins*, but to another Buddhist school called *Kāśyapiyās*. However, *Abhidharmakoshabhāṣya* is a much later work than the Third Council. Therefore we are not sure whether the name of *vibhajjavāda* was given to *kāśyapiyās* some time after the Third Council or they got it before they were separated from *Theravādins*. But one thing is certain. That is to say that *Kāśyapiyās* were entitled to get this name because of the fact that they presented a view of their own analyzing the *Sarvāstivāda* theory of tri-temporal existence of *Dharmās*. *Sarvāsti* (all exist always) theory leads to a kind of soul theory which maintains that something like substance exists eternally. Therefore it was subjected to severe criticism from other Buddhist sects even before the Third Buddhist Council. It is very likely that the theory of all existence which seemed to be going against the Buddhist teaching on the existence of being led to the emergence of the Third Buddhist Council. As *Theravadins* have presented a theory analyzing the tri-temporal existence of *Dharmās*, at the time of Third Council they may have been entitled to get the name of *Vibhajjavāda*.

According to Prof. Karunadasa, because of the position taken up by *Theravāda* as against the theory of tri-temporality of *Dhammas* of *Sarvāstivāda* which was not only a controversial issue at the time of Third Council but also the major factor that led to the Third Council that *Theravāda* was known as *vibhajjavāda*<sup>25</sup>. The *Sarvāstivāda* theory explains that the *Dharmas* exist in all the three period of time, past, future and present. Rejecting both past and future existence of the *Dharmās*, *Theravāda* accepts only the present existence of *Dharmās*. Taking this *Theravāda* position into consideration Prof. Karunadasa observes:

"While the existence of the *Dhammas* in the present phase of time is asserted, the existences of *Dhammas* in the past and future phases of time are negated. It is very likely therefore that in the context of this controversial issue that the *Theravādins* too came to be known as *Vibhajjavādins*<sup>26</sup>"

*Vibhajjavāda* is not a name of a separate Buddhist school distinct from *Theravāda*. The *Theravāda* itself was known as *Vibhajjavāda* due to the fact that they held the view that the Buddha was the advocator of *Vibhajjavāda* at the interrogation by the King Asoka. There was no recognition to the *Theravāda* as *Vibhajjavāda* before the Council nor they received this name even at the Council and there is no evidence to show that they changed their name of *Theravāda* to be known as

<sup>23</sup> . Samantapāsādikā-nidānakathā

<sup>24</sup> . Abhidharmakoshabhāṣya. 296

<sup>25</sup> . Y. Karunadasa, The Theravāda Abhidhamma, p. 290

<sup>26</sup> . Ibid



*Vibhajjavāda* even after the Council. What happened was that they replied to the King Asoka as mentioned earlier that the Buddha was a *Vibhajjavādi*. Therefore, it should be mentioned here that a group of monks did not appear in the name of *Vibhajjavāda* among the eighteen Buddhist schools other than *Theravāda* at anytime in the history of Buddhism, though some modern scholars have attempted to show that the *Vibhajjavāda* is a distinct school from which Sri Lankan *Theravādins* were derived at the Third Buddhist council.

## Mahisāsaka

Two phases of *Mahisāsaka* School are recognized by the scholars which, were existed in two different time periods in the history of Buddhism in India. Pāli tradition of Sri Lanka speaks of the *Mahisāsaka* from which *Sabbatthivāda* (*Sarvāstivāda*) came into existence. According to this view, *Mahisāsaka* appeared first as a branch of the *Theravāda* and *Sarvāstivāda* developed later as an offshoot of *Mahisāsaka*. But *Vasumitra*'s account of eighteen sects refers to a *Mahisāsaka* which is considered as a branch of *Sarvāstivāda* and other Schools of the *Theravāda* group such as *Kāshyapiya* and *Sautrāntika* according to *Vasumitra*, came one after another also from the *Sarvāstivāda* in different time periods.. The scholars who tried to reconcile these two sources namely, Pāli and *Vasumitra* maintain that Pāli sources talk about the earlier phase of *Mahisāsaka* missing the later phase while *Vasumitra* refers to the later phase missing the earlier phase of the *mahisāsaka*.

### Earlier phase of Mahisāsaka

According to the *Mahisāsaka* vinaya, the origin of *Mahisāsakās* can be traced back to the differences of opinion between the first Buddhist councilors and the Elder *Dakkhināgiri Purāna*. As mentioned earlier in the chapter dealing with first Buddhist Council, *Theravāda vinaya* though it did not record further details, acknowledged that *Purana* was not in agreement with the work of the council. *Mahisāsaka vinaya* tells us that Elder *Purana* has insisted on a Second Council with the intention of the inclusion of seven additional *vinaya* rules relating to food which were not accepted by the first councilors and further it says that there was a second rehearsal presided over by Elder *Purāna* where, the texts were recited as same as the first only with the addition of seven *vinaya* rules. According to *Dharmaguptakā* sect which is a Branch off of *Mahisāsaka*, the amount of rules is not seven but eight. However, *Mahisāsaka* has given much prominent in place and esteem to *Purana*. Considering this situation, scholars are of the opinion that the monks who were not wholehearted about First Council formed a group of monks as against the *Therās* of the First Council which, was later developed to a distinct sect by the name of *Mahisāsaka*<sup>27</sup>

In relation to the teachings of earlier *Mahisāsakās*, they were much in common with the teachings of the *Theravādins*. With regard to the existence of *Dharmās* which are the ultimate factors of empirical existence, they agree with *Theravādins* who advocate the present existence of the *Dharmās* rejecting both past and present existence. Though the *Theravādins* accept one unconditioned Dharma (= *Nibbāna*) only in *Mahisāsaka* view, there are nine unconditioned *Dharmās* namely, *Pratisankhyānirodha* (cessation through discrimination), *Apratisakhyānirodha* (cessation independent of discrimination), *Ākāsa* (space), *Āneñjatā* (immovability), *Kusaladharmatathatā* (suchness of the *Dharmās* that are meritorious), *Akusalahdharma-tathatā* (suchness of the *dharmās* that are unmeritorious), *Avyākṛta-dharma-tathatā* (suchness of the *dharmās* that are neither meritorious nor unmeritorious), *Mārgānga-tathatā* (suchness of the factors of the path) and *Pratitya-samutpāda-dharma-tathatā* (suchness of the law of dependent origination).

<sup>27</sup> . See Nalinaksha Dutt, *Buddhist Sects in India*. P.122

Most of the other doctrinal views presented by earlier *Mahisāsakās* are in agreement with the *Theravādins* but contrary to those of the *Sarvāstivādins*. Position of the Arahant given in the *Theravāda* retains as same in the *Mahisāsaka* too. Anyhow, the later holds that the stream-enter (srotāpanna) in the Āryan path has a chance to retrogression. They have nothing to say about the nature of the Buddha as they assert the position of the Buddha as *Theravādins* do. The Buddha is included in the *Sangha* as in the *Theravāda*. But they oppose to the opinion of the later that a gift made to the *Sangha* is more meritorious than that of the Buddha personally.

**Later phase of Mahisāsakās** shows that it is much closer to *Sarvāstivāda* in their opinions than to the *Theravāda*. It seems that the later phase of the *Mahisāsaka* reviewed its earlier opinions with the influence of *Sarvāstivāda* teachings and as a result it became quite closer to the *Sarstivāda*. Especially with regard to the existence of *Dharmās*, it was not different from the former. It also accepted the tri-temporal existence of *Dharmās* advocated by the *Sarvāstivādins*.

## Sarvāstivāda

Among the sub-sects of *Theravada*, the *Sarvāstivāda* can be considered to be the more prominent and well-known Buddhist school in India after *Theravādins* found their center in Sri Lanka. With the dissension from *Theravāda* due to its theory of tri-temporality at the time of third Buddhist Council, the *Sarvāstivādins* first established their center in Mathura and then shifted to *Gandhāra* and *Kashmir*. They received much more popularity there and were succeeded to propagate Buddhism not only all over Northern India but also in the countries out side India like Central Asia and China. *Sarvāstivāda* is the only Buddhist School except *Theravāda* under whose predominance a council was held. *Sarvāstivādins* are supposed to be the major participants in the Fourth Council convened under the patronage of King *Kanishka* in 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D where the commentaries were made to *Sarvāstivāda* Canon by the name of *Vibhāṣhā* and as the result *Sarvāstivāda* came to be known as *Vaibhāṣhika*.

*Sarvāstivādins* also possessed almost a full set of their Canon in Sanskrit language. They adopted Sanskrit as their medium just like *Theravādins* selected Pāli. Though, in the course of time original Sanskrit version of the Canon was lost and we are fortunate enough to have it today in its Chinese and Tibetan versions. Some of the *sūtrās* belonged to their *dirgāgama* have been found recently from Afghanistan in original Sanskrit.

*Sarvāstivāda* Canon also consisted of three Pitakās by the name of *Sūtra*, *Vinaya* and *Abhidharma* quite similar to *Pali Tipitaka* of *Theravāda*. *Sūtra Pitaka* of *Sarvstivāda* is comprised of four *āgamās* namely *Digha*, *Madhyama Samyukta* and *Angottara*. Instead of *Nikāya* of *Theravāda* the name: “*Āgama*” was given to the sections of *Sūtra-pitaka* by the *Sarvāstivādins*. It is believed that they did not recognize a fifth section of the *Sutra-pitaka* at the beginning of the sect unlike *Theravādins*. *Divyavadāna*, a work of *Sarvāstivāda* talks about only four *Āgamās* (*Āgama catustayam*)<sup>28</sup> *Theravādins* accept the fifth section of their *Sutta-pitaka* in the name of *Khuddaka-nikāya* which is a collection of fifteen separate books. *Sarvāstivādins* also had some texts such as *Udāna-varga*, *Sūtra-nipāṭa*, *Sthavira-gāthā*, *Dharmapada*, *Vimāna-vastu* and *Buddhavamsa* which can be considered as the counterparts of corresponding *Theravāda Khuddhaka* texts. This reveals the fact that they too have recognized even at a later stage, the fifth section of *Sutra-pitaka* collectively taking those texts as *Kshudraka-āgama*. We can find the reference to *Kshudrakāgama* in the *Abhidharmakosha* of Vasubandhu.

<sup>28</sup> . *Divyavadāna*, p.17, 331

*Dirgāgama* of the *Sūtrapitaka* contains 30 discourses whereas 34 in the *Digha-nikāya* of Pāli Canon. The arrangement of the discourses is quite different from that of *Digha-nikāya*. *Madhymāgama* consisted of 222 discourses out of which 82 correspond to the discourses of *Anguttara-nikāya*, 10 to those of *Samyutta-nikāya*, 9 to those of *Digha-nikāya* and the remaining to those of *Majjhima-nikāya*. So, we can not expect similar arrangement of the discourse of *Madhymāgama* with that of *Majjhima-nikāya* of Pāli Canon. Chinese version of *Samyuktāgama* consisted of fifty sections in which large number of discourses corresponds to those of *Anguttara-nikāya* and a few to those of other *nikāyās*. Further it contains few other discourses to which no counterparts can be found in the Pāli Canon. *Ekottarāgama* of Sarvāstivāda contains less amount of discourses than that of *Anguttara-nikāya*. This is mainly due to the fact that the large amount of discourses corresponding to the discourses of *Anguttara-nikāya* was incorporated to *Madhyama* and *Samyukta āgamās*.

According to the catalogue of Chinese Canonical literature Sarvāstivāda Vinaya texts are as follows:

*Sarvāstivāda-vinaya-mātrkā*  
*Sarvāstivāda-vinaya-vibhāṣā*  
*Sarvāstivāda-vinaya-saṅgraha*  
*Dasādhyaṃyada-vinaya-nidāna*  
*Dasādhyaṃyada-vinaya-bhikṣu-prātimokṣa*  
*Dasādhyaṃyada-vinaya-bhikṣuṇi-prātimokṣa*  
*Dasādhyaṃyada-vinaya or the Sarvāda-vinaya*<sup>29</sup>

Though Sarvāstivādins did not have a similar arrangement of their vinaya-pitaka to *Theravāda vinaya pitaka* which consisted of five sections, they also possess almost all the contents of the *Theravāda-vinaya* in differently arranged separate books as listed above. *Dasādhyaṃyada-vinaya* is considered to be their principle *vinaya* text which contains fourteen sections, though the name of the text implies ten sections. Out of fourteen the first eight sections deal with *Prātimokṣa-sūtrās*. Ninth section is related respectively to *sikṣhāpada* (vinaya-rules of the monks), *Poshadha* (recitation of *prātimokṣa*-rules), *Pāpadesanā* (confession of the offences), *Varshāvāsa* (rainy retreatment), *Carma-vastu* (use of leather of shoes), *Bhaishajya-vastu* (use of medicines) and *Civara-vastu* (use of robes). Tenth section deals with eight kinds of subject matters namely *Kathina* (rules relating to *Kathina* robe), *Kausāmbi* (story about the dispute between two group of monks at *Kosambi*), *Campā* (events at *Campā*), *Pāndulohitaka* (deeds of *Pāndulohitaka* monks), *Saṅghāvasesa-parivāsa* (probation for *Saṅghāvasesa*-offence), *Paticchanna* (concealment of offences), *Sayanāsana* (rules for beds and seats) and *Asamudācārika-dhamma* (proper conducts of monks). Subject matters of ninth and tenth sections are found in the *Khandhakās* (*cūlavagga* and *Mahāvagga*) of *Theravāda-vinaya*. The eleventh section known as *samyukta* is related to the miscellaneous rules such as *Dutangās*. The twelfth section which is known as *Bhikṣuṇi-prātimokṣa* contains the rules pertaining to nuns. The thirteenth section is an arrangement of the rules in numerical order. The last section comprised of *Upāli-paripucchā*, which is a text on rules.

## Abhidharma-pitaka

*Abhidharma pitaka* of Sarvāstivāda is consisted of seven books quite similar to that of *Theravāda*. It is the traditional belief of *Theravāda* that the *Abhidhamma pitaka* contains the direct teachings of the Buddha. But the Sarvāstivādins openly accept that their *Abhidharma* texts were compiled by the authors. Observes Bhikkhu KL Dhammajoti: "The Sarvāstivā tradition on the other hand,

<sup>29</sup> . Quoted from *Buddhist Sects in India* of Nalinaksha Dutt P.140

accepts that their canonical *abhidharma* works were compiled by the disciples. Nevertheless, like the *theravāda* it too maintains that the Buddha is the real author; the compilers simply gathered up and rearranged His scattered teachings<sup>30</sup>

The seven texts of *Abhidharma-pitaka* are as follows:

*Dharma-skandha* of Ārya Sāriputra

*Sangiti-paryāya* of Mahākaustilya

*Prajñāpti-sāstra* of Ārya Maudgalyāyana

*Vijñānakāya* of Sthavira Devasarma

*Prakaranapāda* of Sthavira Vasumitra

*Dhātukāya* of Pūrṇa and

*Jñānaprasthāna* of Ārya Kātyāyana putra

Apart from these Canonical texts of *Abhidhamma*, *Sarvāstivādins* possess a quite extensive *Abhidharmic* literature consisted of commentaries to Canonical which, are known as *Vibhāṣhā* and compendiums. *Sarvāstivādins* have paid much more attention to *Abhidharma* than to the *Sūtrās*. They were entitled to get their name *Sarvāstivāda* as the result of their peculiar interpretation of *Dharmas* coming under *Abhidharma*. They interpret Dharma as a kind of entity which exists in all three periods of time e.g. past, future and present.

*Dhammās* are the ultimate factors into which the whole of empirical existence can be analyzed. In the *Abhidharmic* sense, term Dharma includes not only conditioned realities which are the basic factors of empirical existence but also unconditioned reality which is known as *nibbāna*. These ultimate or basic factors are accepted as the existing realities in the ultimate sense. The whole *Abhidharmic* system whether it belongs to *Theravāda*, *Sarvāstivāda* or any other Buddhist school is based on this Dharma theory. What is peculiar to *Sarvāstivāda* Dharma theory is that it holds that the *Dhammās* which are conditioned and unconditioned realities and which have their own nature (*sva-bhāva*) and own characteristics (*sva-lakṣhaṇa*) exist in all the time that is to say past, future and present.

As this *Sarvāstivāda* theory of *Sarvamasti* (all exist with their own nature and own characteristics) implies that a dharma has some sort of essence which is endurable permanently, it was subject to vehement criticism mostly of *Theravādins* and *Sautrāntikas*. *Theravāda* critique on tri-temporality of *Sarvāstivādins* can be found in *Kathāvatthupakkaraṇa* composed by Elder *Moggallāna-putta-tissa*. According to the opponents of the *Sarvāstivādins*, this theory comes closer to a kind of eternalism, mostly to *Sāṃkhya* doctrine of *Parināma* which is not acceptable to the teaching of the Buddha.

It should not be understood as *Sarvāstivādins* are against the theory of impermanence of Early Buddhism. They too really accept the impermanence of the conditioned *Dhammās*. What they intent by accepting the existence of past and future is that past *Dhammās* are transmitted into present and present *Dhammās* into future. It is not that they present their theory of tri-temporality of *Dhammās* without the scriptural basis. They cited some *Sūtra* passages in their favor. One of the passages taken from the *Sūtrās* by them as a proof for their theory says:

"O bhikkhū-s, if past *rūpa* did not exist, the learned noble disciple could not have become disgusted with regard to the past *rūpa*. It is because past *rūpa* exists that the learned noble disciple becomes disgusted with regard to the Past *rūpa*. If future *rūpa* did not exist, the learned noble disciple could not have become free from delight with regard to the future *rūpa*. It is because future *rūpa* exists that..."<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> .Bhikkhu KL Dhammajoti, *Sarvāstivā Abhidharma*, Centre for Buddhist Studies, Sri Lanka, 2004, p. 2

<sup>31</sup> *Abhidharma-kāśha-bhāṣya* by Vasubandhu, p.295

Though the *Sarvāstivādins* accept the continuous existence of the *Dharmās*, they are unable to precisely specify the nature of the existence. Their inability of explaining the real nature of the existence of *Dharmās* is quite evident from the fact there are four types of theories arose within the *Sarvāstivādins* themselves. Four theories are as follows:

### **1. Theory of change of mode of being (*Bhāvānyathātva-vāda*)**

This theory which is attributed to Venerable *Dharmatrāta* enumerates that when a Dharma operates in time it changes (*anyathā*) its mode (form or shape) of being (*bhāva*) into another mode while its substance (*dravya*) remains without change. This means that when a Dharma transits from one moment of time to another moment of time its preceding mode of being takes different mode in the succeeding moment but its substance remains the same without any difference. When it transits from past to present it leaves its past mode and takes the present mode. But nothing happens to its substance. This is just like a golden vessel broken into pieces. Mode of the unbroken state of vessel becomes different in the Broken state for modes of the pieces are different than that of the vessel. But, the goldenness remains in the both states.

### **2. Theory of change in characteristics (*Lakshana-anyathātva-vāda*)**

The advocator of this theory, Venerable *Ghoshaka* says that each temporal period has three temporal characteristic. When one temporal characteristic is prominent other two characteristics become latent. This means that when a dharma is in the past it conjoins with the past characteristic then its present and future characteristics can not be prominently seen. But, the Dharma remains the same in all the three periods of times. This is like the case of a man who is attached to a particular woman at present is not said to be detached from other women. In this case, though the man's presently attachment to a particular woman remains prominent, he is not deprived of his capacity of attaching to other women.

### **3. Theory of the change in state (*Avasthānyathātva-vāda*)**

This theory is attributed to venerable *Vasumitra*. It advocates that there is a change in the state (*avasthā*) but not in substance. The state of a Dharma is determined by the causal efficacy (*kāritra*) of the Dharma. According to this theory, when a Dharma is in a state when it does not produce its function or in other the causal efficacy is not in action it is called future. When it produces its function it is called present. When after having produced its function a dharma does not produce its function any more it is past. Here, the substance of the Dharma remains the same. But the state of the Dharma determined by its causal efficacy becomes change in all the three phases of time. It is like a case of throwing a ball into different position. When it is thrown into the position of ten it takes the significance of ten. When it is thrown into the position of hundred it takes the significance of hundred. Here same ball moves to different position, though the position is changed the ball does not change. In the same way a dharma is not subject to change but its position changes in three period of time.

### **4. Theory of the change of (temporal) relativity (*Anyathā-anyathātva-vāda*)**

The advocator of this theory is venerable *Buddhadeva*. According to this theory, dharma remains the same at all the times, but what is changed is the relativity of it to the phase of the time. Three time periods e.g., past, future and present depend on the relative existence of the object. A *Dhamma* is said to be in the past in relation to present and future. Like wise a *Dharma* is said to be in the present in relation to past and future. In the same way a *dharmā* is said to be in the present in relation to the past and the future. Thus a dharma remains the same without changing, but its dependence or relativity becomes different, just as the same woman is called mother in reference to her daughter, daughter in reference to her mother and wife in reference to her husband.

In comparison to *Theravādins*, *Sarvāstivādins* do not offer much difference to the position of the Buddha. They also emphasize the historical personality of the Buddha. However, it seems that they are more interested in attributing more divine powers to the Buddha. The position of *Arahant* appears to be deteriorated in the hand of *Sarvāstivādins*. Quite contrary to *Theravādins* they maintain some weaknesses of the *Arahant*. According to them, an arahant do not obtain the knowledge of the cessation of further birth (*anupāda-jñāna*), but they can attain the knowledge of the destruction of defilements (*kṣaya-jñāna*). Further they insist that the *arahant* can receive the results of the past karmās. Another noteworthy difference of opinion between *Theravādins* and *Sarvāstivādins* is the concept of *antarābhava*. *Sarvāstivādins* hold that there is an intermediate state of existence in between death of a person and his birth. This says that in some cases immediately after the death, a person can not get his complete rebirth in another plain of existence due to the fact that the place of rebirth is not yet prepared. Therefore, subtle *khandhas* have to wait for sometimes to be born until they find the suitable parents in the next state of existence.

## Dharmaguptaka

This school is believed to have descended from the *Mahisāsakās*. The reason as to why the group of monk by the name of *Dharmaguptaka* was separated from *Mahisāsaka* is unknown, but its name suggests that a monk called *Dharmagupta* was responsible for the emergence of this school. Some scholars try to identify this name *Dharmagupta* with the name *Yonaka Dhammarakkhita* which appeared in the list of missionaries sent by the King Asoka. According to Sri Lankan chronicles, *Yonaka Dhammarakkhita* was sent to *Aparantaka* for the missionary work. As the *Vinaya* of the *Dharmaguptakās* was introduced to China by *Buddhayasas* who was a native of Kashmir it is believed that the centre of this school was established in north western India. However this school gained popularity in central Asia and China. It is said that the *Vinaya* of this school is still in use in some East Asian countries such as Taiwan, China, Korea and Vietnam.

*Dharmaguptakā* are also believed to have their own *tri-pitaka*, but presently we are in a position to talk about the Chinese translations of their *Vinaya* text and *Abhinishkramana-sūtra*. The *Dharmaguptaka vinaya* was translated into Chinese by Kuang Seng Kai in 152 A.D. *Abhinishkramana-sūtra* was translated to Chinese between 280 and 312 A.D. *Abhidharma-pitak*.

With regard to their doctrine we do not have much detail of the doctrinal matters as there is no available book of their *Sūtra-pitaka* or *Abhidharma-pitaka*. Anyhow it is believed that they were of the opinion that the gifts or donations made to the Order are more meritorious than those made to the Buddha. This view is going quite against to what was held by *Mahisāsakā-s* which is believed to be their original school. The respect and veneration to *cetiya-s* is also said to be highly praised by *Dharmaguptakā-s*. Further, they do not do any distinction of the liberation gained either through *Buddha-yāna* or *Srāvaka-yāna* though they accept that there may be

difference between those two paths. In consonant with *Theravādins* and contrary to *Sarvāstivādins* they express that the realization of truth is happened to be at once but, not gradually.

## Kāsyapīya/Kāsyapika

*Sthavirīya*, *Saddharmavarsaka* and *Suvarsaka* are the other names attributed to *Kāsyapīyās*. This school is said to be a branch off from the *Sarvāstivāda*, in certain aspects, it appears to be a compromise between *Theravāda* and *Sarvāstivāda*. With regard to the Dharma theory of Abhidharma, both *Theravāda* and *Sarvāstivāda* represent in a way, two extreme positions. That Dharmās exist only in the present is the position taken by the *Theravādins*. On the contrary, *Sarvāstivādins* accept the existence of Dharmās in all the tri-period of time. In this regard *Kāsyapīyās* appear to be taken the middle position and maintain that the present and a part of the past exist, whereas the future and a part of past do not exist. They have taken this position on the basis of Karmic results. The past karma that has not borne fruit (*adatta-phala-avipākavipāka*) exists; the past karma that has borne fruit (*datta-phala-vipākavipāka*<sup>32</sup>) does not exist. This qualified version of Dharma theory presented by *Kāsyapīyās* has been amount to identify them as *Vibhajyavādins*. In the *Abhidharmakosha-bhāṣya*, *Vasubandhu* citing this qualified theory has identified it with *Vibhajyavāda* and its holders with *Kāsyapīyās*<sup>33</sup>

In addition to above mentioned explanation of Dharma theory another opinion held by the *Kāsyapīyās* is that the *Arahant* has both knowledge of the destruction of cankers (*Kṣayajñāna*) and the knowledge of the cessation of rebirth (*anupāda-jñāna*). This is of course going against the *Sarvāstivāda* and in agreement with the *Theravāda*.

## Sankrāntika or Sautrāntika

Though the two names *Sankrāntika* and *Sautrāntika* are used to denote one and the same school, according to Pāli tradition *Sankrānti* (*sankanti*) *vāda* is an offshoot of *Kāsyapīyās* and *Sautrāntika* is a branch of *Sankrāntivāda*. According to *Vasumitra*, both refer to one and the same school and it is separated from *Sarvāstivāda*. However, it is commonly believed that the *Sautrāntika* is the sister school of *Sarvāstivāda*. It is said that this school believed in transition (*sankrānti*) of substance-like a unit of subtle *skandha* (*skandhamātra*) from one existence to another existence until it extinguishes with the realization of *Nirvāna*; hence it was known as *Sankrānti-vāda*. This view was presented by *Sankrāntikās* as against the *Pudgala-vādins* who maintained the transmigration of *pudgala*.

As the name suggests *sautrāntikās* (*sūtra-antika*) accept discourses (*sūtra*) of the Buddha are more authentic than the *Abhidharma* *śāstra* which *Sarvāstivādins* has given the priority.

A noteworthy contribution made by the *Sautrāntikās* to the field of Buddhist thought is their theory of momentary-ness (*kṣanikatva-vāda*). As the result of controversy between *Sarvāstivādins* and *Sautrāntikās* over the characteristics of the existence of the conditioned (*samskrta*) dharmās, doctrine of impermanence of Early Buddhism was developed to a theory of momentariness in the hand of *Sautrāntikās*. *Sarvāstivādins* accept the duration (*sthiti*) in between the emergence (*utpāda*) and cessation (*Bhanga*) with regard to the existence of *Dharmās*. In the *Sautrāntika* view,

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<sup>32</sup> *Kathāvatthu*. 1. 1

<sup>33</sup> *Abhidharmakosha-bhāṣya*. 296

there is no duration in between the emergence and the destruction of the *Dharmās* as in the way that they explain the momentariness.

The *Sautrāntikās* reject the concept of *Avijñapti-rūpa* (non-informative matter) accepted by *Sarvāstivādins* in their classification of matter in *Abhidharma*. According to the later, *avijñapti-rūpa* belongs to *Dharmāyatana*. For them it is the one and only *Dharmāyatana-rūpa*. *Sautrāntikās* strongly criticize and reject the acceptance of *avijñapti* as a classification of matter.

## Haimavata/Hemavata

There are no evidences to show that *Haimavata* was a powerful or popular Buddhist school in the history of Buddhism. Sri Lankan chronicles count it as a later school appeared some time after the eighteen schools. However, according to *Bhavya* and *Vinitadeva*, *Haimavatās* were deviated from *Mahāsaṅghikās*. But *Vasumitra* records that their main doctrines come nearer to that of *Sarvāstivāda* School. Though the scholars are in favor of *Vasumitra's* view, we can not forget the doctrinal similarity between *Mahāsaṅghika* and *Haimavata*.

The following doctrinal distinctions of the *Haimavatās* are shown by *Vasumitra*:

*Bodhisatvās* are average being (*prthagjana*).

*Bodhisatvās* have no *Kāma* or *rāga* when they enter into the mother's womb.

Heretics can not gain the five supernatural powers.

There is no *Brahmacariya-vāsa* (religious life) among the gods and

arahants have ignorance and doubt; they are subject to temptation and they get the realization with the help of others; and the *Arahanthood* is attained by an exclamation.

## Vātsīputrīya and Sammitīya

Though it is customarily enlisted that *Vātsīputrīya* and *Sammitīya* as two different sects in eighteen Buddhist Schools, we do not have separate sets of doctrines belonging to those two sects; both represent one and the same doctrine. It is believed that the *Vātsīputrīya* later came to be known as *Vātsīputrīya-Sammitīya*. Scholars prefer to trace the origin of *Vātsīputrīyās* to the *Vajjiputtaka* monks who held ten unlawful factors as lawful at the time of the second Buddhist council. Nalināksh Dutt in his *Buddhist sect in India* observes: "The monks adhering to these schools were probably those *Vajjiputtakās* who submitted to the decisions of the Second Council and gave up their heresies, as distinguished from those who preferred to remain apart and form a distinct *Saṅgha* of their own."<sup>34</sup> According to *Vinitadeva*, *Vātsīputrīya* was one of the sub-division of *Sammitīya* School and others were *Kuru-Kullaka* and *Avantaka*.

*Vātsīputrīya-Sammitīyās* were more popular in the name of *Pudgala-vādins* as they held the view that there is an unchanging factor which is indefinable and which transmigrates from one existence to other securing the identity of a being throughout the *Saṁsāra*. This unchanging factor which they call "person" (*pudgala*) is neither the same as the five aggregates nor different from them. "First part of the definition shows where the *Pudgalavādins* differ from other Buddhists, and the second where they differ from non-Buddhists who admit a soul-entity" says Prof. Karunadasa.<sup>35</sup>

According to the teaching of the Buddha, the constantly changing five aggregates can not transmigrate from one existence to next existence, Hence; it seems that *Sammitīyās* may have believed in the ultimate reality of the person in order to give a rational explanation to the

<sup>34</sup> . Nalinaksha Dutt, *Buddhist Sects in India*, p.181

<sup>35</sup> *Theravāda Abhidhamma*, p.24



concepts such as moral responsibility (karma) and rebirth (*punabbhava*). It is not that *Sammitīyās* present this theory of "person" without scriptural basis, they resort scriptural authority as well in defense of their theory. One of the references to this theory shown by them is the *Bhārahāra-sutta* which speaks of a burden (*bhāhāra*), the bearer of the burden (*bhārahāra*), the taking up of the burden (*bhārādāna*) and the laying down of the burden (*bhāra-nikkhepana*)<sup>36</sup>. *Sammitīyās* claim that this *sutta* acknowledges a person (bearer-*bhārahāra*) apart from the five aggregates (burden-*bhāra*)<sup>37</sup>. Another citation of the *Sammitīyās*, which denotes a concept of a person which they seek to establish, is the *Na tumhākam sutta*, the discourse of "what does not belong to you".<sup>38</sup> Here in this discourse "what does not belong to you" is identified as the five aggregates. This also is suggestive of a person besides the aggregates that do not belong to him. In agreement with the *Sarvāstivādins Vātsīputrīya*- *Sammitīyās* also accept the concept of *Antarābhava* which admits that every being destined to be born in *Kāmaloka* or *Rūpaloka* remains for some time in an interim existence before the proper birth with the complete set of aggregates (*skandhās*).

### Dharmottariya, Bhadrāyānīya and Channāgarika

The sources which speak about the Buddhist sects do not pay considerable attention to the special doctrines pertaining to these three schools. *Vinītadeva* in his record of the Buddhist sects dedicates only one verse regarding the peculiarities of the three schools. The verse reveals that they differ from the views of the *Sammitīyās* regarding the attainment of an *Arahant* and the chances of his falls from *Arahanthood*<sup>39</sup>. The scholars suggest that these three schools agreed with *Sammitīyās* on account of other doctrinal matters. Anyhow, in the *Kthāvatthupparakana* of *Theravādins* the doctrine of the gradual realization of the four noble truths is contributed to the *Bhadrāyānīyā*.

<sup>36</sup> . See *Dīghanikāya*, 111. 83: *Samyuttanikāya*, I. 71

<sup>37</sup> . *Abhidharmakosavyākhyā* (*sputārtha*) of *yasomitra*, 706

<sup>38</sup> . *Samyuttanikāya*, iv. 81-82

<sup>39</sup> Nalinaksha Dutt, *Eighteen Buddhist Sects*, p. 207.